

The Implications of Genesis 2:5 for the Length of the Days of Creation

Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground. (Gen 2:5)

Genesis 2:5 describes a time in the process of creation when "the shrub(s) of the field... and... plant(s) of the field had not yet sprouted." Two reasons are given for this. There was no rain and no man to cultivate the ground. Therefore at the time of Genesis 2:5 if there had been rain and someone to cultivate the ground, there would have been this vegetation. However, after being watered, it takes seeds a minimum of eight days to appear above the soil.¹ Therefore the logic of Genesis 2:5 requires that the seeds in question had to be planted at least eight days before their sprouting from the ground. This is under the generous assumption that the first appearance of a sprout above the soil counts as a bush of the field or a plant of the field. Genesis 2:5 is describing day six of creation at the very latest (cf. Gen 2:7). The seeds were planted on day three at the earliest. Thus at most the days are three days apart (four days if the seeds were planted at the very beginning of day three and sprouted at the very end of day six). Therefore the only conclusion to draw is that days three to six were longer than three 24-hour days.

The answer to the objection that vegetation could have grown miraculously fast is fact that the growth depends upon rain and manpower, indicating that the growth is by natural means, not supernatural. If the growth were miraculous, there would be no need for rain or manpower.²

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² Adapted from John Beckman Ph.D., with only slight modification.